DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 377 259 UD 030 183

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TITLE Living with Racism: The Black Middle-Class Experience.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-8070-0924-5
PUB DATE 94
NOTE 412p.
AVAILABLE FROM Beacon Press, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02108-2892 (ISBN-0-8070-0924-5, $25).
PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Blacks; Cultural Context; *Educationally Disadvantaged; Elementary Secondary Education; Higher Education; Housing; Interviews; *Middle Class; Public Schools; *Racial Discrimination; Social Bias; *Social Problems; *Stereotypes; Urban Areas; Urban Problems
IDENTIFIERS *African Americans

ABSTRACT

Interviews with 209 African Americans in a number of United States cities are the basis for a discussion of the black middle-class experience. Although middle-class African Americans appear to have secured the promises of the American dream, conversations make it apparent that they have experienced discrimination and hatred from Whites. The chapters are: "The Continuing Significance of Racism"; "Navigating Public Places"; "Seeking a Good Education"; "Navigating the Middle-Class Workplace"; "Building a Business"; "Seeking a Good Home and Neighborhood"; "Contending with Everyday Discrimination: Effects and Strategies"; "Changing the Color Line: The Future of U.S. Racism." The book concludes with notes and an index. Of particular interest is Chapter 3, "Seeking a Good Education." There is not much information on the character and breadth of discrimination faced by black youth in schools and colleges, but some studies are suggestive. In spite of housing laws banning discrimination, U.S. cities remain bastions of racial segregation, and public schools in the cities may not be as well-equipped or staffed as those in white suburban areas. Elementary and secondary curricula often present obstacles to black students, and stereotyping is commonplace. In higher education, the situation is no better, and discrimination is subtly embedded in the values and patterns of traditionally white colleges. Indeed, instructors often seem to make the educational agendas of black students more difficult. In education, as in American life as a whole, discrimination is a process that shapes the lives of African Americans. (SLD)

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